



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Response to Rolf Ekeus, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities**

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
June 29, 2006

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On behalf of the United States, it is a great pleasure to welcome you, Commissioner Ekeus, back to the Permanent Council. We are pleased with your excellent work addressing national minority-related issues in OSCE participating States. We thank you for providing us with a comprehensive update on your recent and planned activities.

We support strongly your continued engagement in Central Asia. Your country visits to Turkmenistan and, in particular, to Kyrgyzstan appear to have been both welcome and useful.

The roundtable on multiethnic policing in Kyrgyzstan that you attended last month came at an important time. Critical knowledge on multiethnic policing issues needs to be expanded among both police institutions and the communities they serve. We support your continued efforts to promote multiethnic policing. As we said the last time you were here, multiethnic policing is not only the right thing to do in terms of meeting the democratic commitments we have all made, it is also the smart thing to do to strengthen stability and security throughout the OSCE community and beyond.

The United States also supports your educational initiative in Central Asia and looks forward to the regional ministerial conference on "Education as a Means of Integration" proposed for the fall. We are encouraged by the positive responses from authorities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan regarding your proposed informal exchange of views on social integration and national minorities scheduled for next month in The Hague. That exchange will serve as a preparatory step for the fall conference. We encourage strongly the participation of all Central Asian states in this meeting.

Other areas outside Central Asia, of course, merit continued attention. We welcome your work in Georgia, Moldova, Southeastern Europe, Latvia, and Estonia. Your efforts to promote social integration, training in various local languages, and ensuring adequate representation of all ethnicities in the political and judicial spheres will go a long way toward forging more stable relations between ethnically diverse regions and communities.

In closing, we would like to thank you and your staff once again for carrying out the commitment of the OSCE to protect the rights of national minorities, to promote tolerance, and to encourage social integration. To do this across a sphere as large, as diverse, and as complex as ours is indeed no small undertaking. The United States assures you, Commissioner, of our continued very strong support for your office in pursuing minority interests across the OSCE community.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.